

Ruchir Arora brings 20+ years of work experience in the automobile, media, and technology sectors providing customer based solutions. He is an alumnus of the prestigious Indian School of Business in Hyderabad with a dual management degree in analytical finance and information technology. He is also a mechanical engineer.

What was the best business advice you received while launching your EdTech startup?

"Always have razor sharp focus on what you've set out to achieve." As entrepreneurs, we tend to have a mind that is full of new ideas, and it can be very hard to train yourself to have a singular focus on the core issue.

What did you do early on that you would do differently today?

Product market fit is always an iterative endeavor, and the right answer to that is to gather feedback. Early on in our launch, we kept feedback as a baton to power on, but a lot of this feedback was backwards. The right approach would have been to speak to as many external stakeholders as possible; in our case, we needed to talk to students and parents to understand their needs. Maintaining this balance in the early days is important.

What inspired you to start your EdTech startup?

I used to get a lot of calls from friends and family looking for advice on education. These calls were all similar, asking me to address how a person who doesn't have top grades should select a college. It is a major decision that will determine your career prospects and yet so confusing! In my experience, more often than not, people just make this decision based on the advice of their family, teachers, or even small-time consultants. Students would not realize that while honest, these suggestions may not have benefitted them. The result? A non-ideal college or a mismatched course.

I used to look at the number of engineers that graduated from India every year and wonder if the industry would be able to absorb all of them or if there would be a surplus of unemployed engineers in the market. And if it was the latter, how would they build their career? This pushed me to help this cross-section of students select the right college.

With 53,000 degree-granting colleges in India, this problem has become more acute. Students have been struggling to get into good colleges, and these colleges have been struggling to get good students. I realized that there was a huge gap. There were colleges available who didn't understand how to reach out to students. And there were students who had the potential, but didn't know the right path to follow. That's when inspiration struck and I decided to create a platform to bridge the gap between students and colleges.

What was the biggest challenge you encountered and how did you mitigate the risks?

Finding the right people is always a challenge, especially when you're trying to sell your dream and asking someone to buy into it. It took a lot of hard work and convincing, but ultimately we were able to hire a good team at CollegeDekho.

What advice do you want to share with today's EdTech startups?

It is always a good idea to look at the scale of the problem that you're trying to solve. We may not realize it, but it is easier to become entangled in smaller issues. The right market size will help you build a large, lasting business. Other key advice would be to always ask if someone else has attempted to address the problem and why their solution has either failed or succeeded.



About CollegeDekho

CollegeDekho assesses the needs of students and helps them find the right college and courses, assisting them through the application process.

Connect

Website:

<https://www.collegedekho.com/>

LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/aroraruchir/>

Email:

ruchir@collegedekho.com

